(c) the steps taken by Government to overcome bottlenecks in the movement of urea;

(d) whether it is fact that under the new policy, movement of stock from factory and/or railhead to godowns is restricted to only three primary buffer in a district; and;

(e) whether Government may consider to increase the buffers to minimum Seven and maximum of ten to widen the scope of transportation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) The Government has approved the New Pricing Scheme(NPS) Stage III on 1.02.2007 to be implemented with effect from 1.10.2006. Under the NPS III, the movement of urea will be monitored throughout the country by an on-line web based monitoring system. The subsidy on urea will be paid only when urea reaches the district. Further, the Department will ensure pre-positioning of urea in each district in adequate quantities to obviate the possibility of shortages and is also mandated to operate a buffer stock through the State Institutional Agencies/fertilizer companies. The freight reimbursement to urea units will now be on actual rail and road leads and will help in ensuring availability of urea in all parts of the country.

All urea reaching a district is required to be routed through the Primary St c' Points (PSPs). Fertilizer companies were initially authorized to identify upto th e PSP's in each district. Subsequently, it has been decided that each company can have one PSP in each Block of the District. This will ensure that urea is delivered in adequate quantity right upto each Block in the country.

Pharma policy and pharma advisory forum

2657. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have so far formulated any Pharma Policy or constituted Pharma Advisory Forum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have decided to set up a National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER); and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and how far this would help in providing highly trained manpower to Pharma Industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 11.1.2007. The Cabinet has referred the Policy to Group of Ministers (GOM). The First meeting of the GOM was held on 10.4.2007. No time frame has been set for finalizing the National Pharmaceuticals Policy.

The Government constituted a Pharmaceutical Advisory Forum on the 26th July, 2004 to have a meaningful dialogue amongst all the stakeholders on

various issues concerning the drug policy viz; ensuring abundant availability at reasonable prices within the country of good quality essential pharmaceuticals of mass consumption and strengthening the indigenous capability for cost effective quality production.

(c) and (d) Yes, Government has decided to set up NIPER at six locations *i.e.*, Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Hajipur (Bihar), Kolkata (West Bengal), Guwahati (Assam) and Rae Bareli (UP). These institutes would provide Masters and Doctoral level courses in pharmaceutical field. These institutes would produce highly qualified and trained technical manpower to suit the needs of pharmaceutical industry in the present global scenario.

Price of medicines

2658. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken so far to reduce prices of generic medicines;

(b) whether Government have issued instructions to pharmaceutical companies to put MRP labels (both in English and Hindi) pertaining to essential life saving drugs; and

(c) whether keeping in view of drugs intended for public health programmes, Government have fixed/revised prices of bulk drugs and formulation packs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) In India, Generic medicines are considered to be those which are sold through trade channels without involving medical representatives. The trade margin of these medicines is usually very high to cover the marketing expenses by the traders. It is proposed to streamline the system of trade margins through the proposed National Pharmaceuticals Policy, 2006. Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 11.1.2007. The Cabinet has referred the Policy to Group of Ministers (GOM). The First meeting of the GOM was held on 10.4.2007. No time frame has been set for finalizing the National Pharmaceutical Policy.

Eleven pharma companies had agreed to voluntarily reduce prices in respect of 886 medicines on packs manufactured after 2nd October, 2006. A survey of the prices of these medicines in selected cities was got done through a pharma PSUs on 25-8-2007 and feedback was also received from some of the companies. As per findings of this survey, out of 886 medicines, 472 medicines with reduced prices are available in Delhi market.

(b) Bilingual labelling is not mandafory for medicines. However Pharma industry was requested to print names of the medicine, manufacturing date, expiry date and MRP in Hindi in addition to the existing system of English. Though the action of Pharma companies on this request of bilingual labels has been proposed to be voluntary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been requested to amend the